(b) As per information provided by Mumbai International Airport Limited (MIAL), no passenger had died of heart attack on 31.3.2006 at Chhatrapati Shivaji International Airport, Mumbai.

(c) Yes, Sir, on the receipt of information it is the duty of Airports Authority/ Airport Operator to ensure that patients receive timely medical attention.

Setting up of private airports

146. MS. MABEL REBELLO: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to allow private players to set up new airports;

(b) if so, the details indicating name of the airports and name of the private operators;

(c) whether Government are aware that some industrial houses have airports at their industrial estates; and

(d) how Government will encourage these companies to open these airport facilities to the civilians as well so that new facilities can be created in the country without his Ministry having to spend anything?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) At present, new airports are being promoted by the concerned State Governments on Public Private Partnership (PPP) basis through Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV). M/s Hyderabad International Airport Limited and M/s Bangalore International Airport Limited have been allowed to set up international airports at Shamshabad near Hyderabad and at Devanhalli near Bangalore respectively.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The extant policy on Airport Infrastructure encourages such ventures.

Development of commercially unviable airports

147. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering, on the recommendations of the Naresh Chandra Committee, to impose an additional cess on air travel to fund development of commercially unviable airports and routes; and

(b) whether this proposed cess will be in addition to the Passenger Service Fee being levied by AAI and the Congestion Surcharge imposed by private carriers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) The matter is under consideration of the Government.

Cess to fund AERA operations

148. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the competition Commission of India has recommended that the proposed Airport Economic Regulatory Authority (AERA) should impose a cess on airline companies and operators to fund its operations;

(b) if so, whether this proposed cess is likely to be passed on to the air traveller by the carriers; and

(c) whether the fuel surcharge presently levied is likely to be reduced on account of fall in Aviation Turbine fuel prices?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) For financial independence of the Airport Economic Regulatory Authority (AERA), Competition Commission of India (CCI) had proposed that there must be a provision in law to levy some kind of charge on the sector that it is going to regulate as a source of revenue.

(b) There is no proposal to levy such cess.

(c) Air fares are not regulated by the Government after repeal of Air Corporation Act, 1953. Domestic Airlines are free to charge air fares, including any surcharge in their commercial judgement.

Foreign Pilots in Aviation Industry

149. SHRI MOINUL HASSAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that expatriate pilots are increasingly becoming a part of India's aviation industry and are poised to out number their Indian counterparts due to increasing demand for pilots; and

(b) if so, the steps Government propose to take in this regard?